

WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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To: Conference Participants
From: World Service Board of Trustees
Date: July 30, 1993
Re: Trustee Action

At our July meeting, we were informed by the Interim Committee that the credit card privileges of one of our members, Jamie S-H. had been revoked. The revocation occurred in accordance with the credit card section of the World Services Travel Policy, adopted by the 1993 World Service Conference. The Interim Committee requested the board's input regarding the revocation of the credit privileges and what, if any, further action should be taken based on unauthorized credit card use.

Jamie discussed with the board the circumstances surrounding his use of the card. The Interim Committee had received several requests for trustee attendance at the European Service Conference and Convention which were not approved. Having spoken with several members of world services, Jamie was aware that the requests for his or any other trustee attendance had been denied. The host committee for the event, however, offered to pay for his attendance shortly before the conference. Jamie purchased the ticket using a WSO credit card and was reimbursed by the host committee at the end of the event. The money and the credit card receipt were presented to a WSO staff member at the close of the event.

The board painstakingly reviewed the credit card policy passed by the conference. We concluded that the policy was clear, giving no alternative to the removal of credit card privileges in instances of unauthorized use. While the policy allows the Interim Committee to decide whether or not to remove someone from office, we are aware that the conference seemed adamant about this point. We realize, however, that the policy was written on the conference floor on the heels of painful and heated discussions regarding credit card use. The policy adopted may be seen as punitive and in some ways a reaction to that situation.

Regardless of any criticism of the policy, we believe that the tone of the conference's feelings toward this issue was clear. Although we believe that Jamie's intentions were good, we also saw his unauthorized use of the card as being inappropriate. While we didn't believe that this action required removal from office as stated in the policy, the board's policy allows for suspension of its members as a sanction. All trustees present unanimously chose this option and suspended Jamie from the board until the start of WSC 1994. In addition, we unanimously supported the value of Jamie's continuation on the board in the future and asked him not to resign. We hope that the length of the suspension will allow the fellowship the time needed to reflect on this suspension and the wording of the adopted travel policy. This will also give the 1994 WSC an opportunity to support or object to our decision.

The decision to suspend Jamie from the board for the duration of this conference year was painful and difficult. We in no way wish to demean his value as a trusted servant. Rather, we believe that the decision made is in concert with the actions taken by the World Service Conference. We invite your input on this issue.

To: Conference participants

From: Jamie S-H, trustee

Date: July 30, 1993

Re: Trustee action

At 10:45am on Tuesday 20 July 1993, a day and half before the start of the European Conference and Convention of NA, I purchased an airline ticket for travel to Stockholm using the WSO credit card which is officially allocated to me. This purchase was in response to a telephone call the previous evening from the host committee in Sweden for the event, stating that they had decided in response to the European Delegates Meeting Coordinator's request to invite me to the event and pay for my travel and put me up, and that I should purchase a ticket as soon as possible at the best price.

I believe it's useful to look at these actions in the context of the events surrounding the ECCNA X, and the final decision on the European Delegates Coordinator's request to reconsider on the travel issue was only communicated to Europe by the Interim Committee halfway through the previous week. However, I don't think it appropriate to go into those details here.

On ringing the travel agent, I was informed of an "early bird" fare that was the cheapest available. On inquiring as to whether I could book the ticket and come in and pay cash at the office, I was informed that it had to be a credit card purchase and the ticket would need to be purchased by noon to allow for processing. I do not have a credit card of my own. The UK is 5-8 hours ahead of the US. I was not comfortable with making a decision to use the WSO credit card alone. However, I felt I had to make the decision one way or the other because of time constraints. If the purchase was made I would save the fellowship L30 (\$45), if not, I would have to go to a travel agent or the airline later in the day and purchase a more expensive ticket. Either way I would still have been able to travel and the Swedish fellowship's committee would have paid the fare.

I took the decision alone and without authorization and was aware it was a risky judgement at the time. On arrival in Stockholm I told various members what I had had to do, including members of the host committee; however I did not mention it to 2 Interim Committee members who were at the event in a personal capacity. Immediately upon reimbursement of the purchase, I gave the credit card receipt and money to George Hollahan from WSO who was officially present, requesting that he pass them on to Bob McDonough, accounts dept. head at WSO.

I am putting this all before you, not in any sense to justify my actions, but to clarify the events. The decision I took was, in light of the conference this year and subsequent events, unutterably stupid and poor judgement. At the time however, having to make a quick decision, I did not think of it. I have to apologise and make amends for my action.